



CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK

CITY PLANNING BOARD

ROOM 304, WATERTOWN CITY HALL
245 WASHINGTON STREET
WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601-3380
(315) 785-7740

MEETING: July 14, 2016

PRESENT:

Larry Coburn, Chairperson
Neil Katzman
Anthony Neddo
Steve Rowell
Michelle Capone

ALSO:

Michael A. Lumbis, Planning & Community
Development Director
Jeffrey Polkowski, Planner
Geoffrey Urda, Planner
Justin Wood, City Engineer

ABSENT:

Linda Fields

The July 14, 2016 Planning Board Meeting was called to order at 3:02 PM by Planning Board Chair Larry Coburn. Mr. Coburn called for a reading of the Minutes from the June 7, 2016 Planning Board Meeting. Mr. Katzman made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Mr. Rowell seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

The first item on the agenda was an application for a Special Use Permit at 338 Academy Street. However, since the applicant was not in attendance to represent the application, the Planning Board moved on to the next item.

WAIVER OF SITE PLAN APPROVAL 1552 STATE STREET – PARCEL # 12-16-113.000

The Planning Board then considered a request submitted by Edward G. Olley Jr., AIA of GYMO, D.P.C. on behalf of James Petersen of Fast Lube of Watertown for the construction of a 10-space, approximately 2,375 square-foot parking lot and associated site improvements located at 1552 State Street, Parcel Number 12-16-113.000.

Mr. Olley and Mr. Petersen were in attendance to represent the request. Mr. Coburn noted that this project was before the Planning Board at a previous meeting as a full Site Plan application, which the Planning Board had voted to table. Mr. Coburn then asked what had changed in the interim.

Mr. Olley replied that nothing had changed, but that he had carried out some of Staff's summary items from the previous submission and resubmitted the application as a Waiver of Site Plan Approval, and therefore he was no longer waiting on a letter from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Mr. Coburn then said that the only summary item outstanding was the need for the applicant to obtain permits.

Mr. Lumbis said that the applicant had reduced the aggregate size of the project to fewer than 2,500 square feet, thus making it eligible for a Waiver, and added that the applicant would keep stormwater on site by adding a drywell. He said that the only thing the applicant still needed was a Fence Permit.

Mr. Olley asked where he would need to go for a Fence Permit. Mr. Lumbis replied that the City Code Enforcement Bureau was responsible for permits.

Mr. Neddo then moved to approve the request for a Waiver of Site Plan Approval submitted by Edward G. Olley Jr., AIA of GYMO, D.P.C. on behalf of James Petersen of Fast Lube of Watertown for the construction of a 10-space, approximately 2,375 square-foot parking lot and associated site improvements located at 1552 State Street, Parcel Number 12-16-113.000, contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant must obtain a Fence Permit prior to the installation of the new fence.

Mr. Katzman seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

**ZONE CHANGE
404 SHERMAN STREET – PARCEL # 10-14-126.000
RESIDENCE C to LIMITED BUSINESS**

The Planning Board then considered a request submitted by Edward G. Olley Jr., AIA of GYMO, D.P.C. on behalf of Darrell Main of Cleveland Funeral Home to change the approved zoning classification 404 Sherman Street, Parcel Number 10-14-126.000 from Residence C to Limited Business.

Mr. Olley was in attendance to represent the request.

Mr. Lumbis then drew the Planning Board's attention to a large map depicting the proposed zone change, noting that board members' packets did not include a smaller map to reference.

Mr. Olley began by noting that this was a corner lot and pointing out that the other three corner parcels at the same intersection were all zoned Limited Business already.

Mr. Olley then said that Mr. Main, who operates a funeral home on the site, intended to construct a small entrance at the rear of his building to provide disabled accessibility and planned expand his parking lot a little bit, and added that these proposed changes were in the next item on the meeting agenda.

Mr. Olley said that the purpose of the zone change request was to permit Mr. Main to have a reasonable sign for his business. Mr. Olley then said that Mr. Main had modified his old sign, but it still did not meet City Code for a Residence C District, and added that the sign would be conformant if it were in a Limited Business District instead.

Mr. Olley then said that part of Mr. Main's long-term motivation was the need to develop a decent buffer between the funeral home and a dilapidated structure next door that recently fell onto Mr. Main's property.

Mr. Rowell then asked if the fallen structure had been cleaned up. Mr. Olley replied in the negative and said that the gentleman that owned that structure has not decided what to do yet. Mr. Olley then said that Mr. Main's desire was to purchase the adjacent parcel and combine it with his own.

Mr. Katzman then asked what the purpose of the zone change was. Mr. Olley replied that it was to meet sign requirements.

Ms. Capone then asked what the sign would look like. Mr. Lumbis replied that a Residence C District does not allow freestanding signs, which was what Mr. Main wished to have for his business. Mr. Polkowski added that Mr. Main previously sought a variance for a freestanding sign, but withdrew that request after determining that it would be too difficult to obtain.

Ms. Capone then asked if the size of the sign was consistent with the rest of the neighborhood. Mr. Olley replied that it would only be 15 square feet. Mr. Neddo added that Mr. Main would need a Sign Permit anyway even if City Council approved his zone change request.

Mr. Coburn said that Staff's memorandum to the Planning Board indicated that the request was not consistent with the City's adopted Land Use Plan. Mr. Polkowski replied that the Land Use Plan was extremely out of date. Mr. Coburn then said that the request seemed straightforward enough.

Ms. Capone then moved to recommend that City Council approve the request submitted by Edward G. Olley Jr., AIA of GYMO, D.P.C. on behalf of Darrell Main of Cleveland Funeral Home to change the approved zoning classification 404 Sherman Street, Parcel Number 10-14-126.000 from Residence C to Limited Business.

Mr. Neddo seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

WAIVER OF SITE PLAN APPROVAL 404 SHERMAN STREET – PARCEL # 10-14-126.000

The Planning Board then considered a request for Waiver of Site Plan Approval submitted by Edward G. Olley, AIA of GYMO, D.P.C. on behalf of Darrell Main of Cleveland Funeral Home for the construction of a 380 square-foot building addition, a 1,860 square-foot asphalt parking lot expansion and associated site improvements located at 404 Sherman Street, Parcel Number 10-14-126.000.

Mr. Olley was in attendance to represent the project.

Mr. Olley began by holding up a large copy of the site plan and pointing out the proposed disabled accessible entrance in the rear of the building. Mr. Olley said that the biggest problem with the existing structure is that if a disabled visitor parks in the rear, they have to go all the way around to the front of the building to the main entrance where there is no accessible entrance anyway.

Mr. Olley then pointed out a section of the site near Mullin Street where the proposed parking lot expansion would be.

Mr. Coburn then noted a summary item on Staff's memorandum regarding grading requirements, and asked if his fellow Planning Board members had any questions. There were none.

Ms. Capone then moved to approve the request for a Waiver of Site Plan Approval submitted by Edward G. Olley, AIA of GYMO, D.P.C. on behalf of Darrell Main of Cleveland Funeral Home for the construction of a 380 square-foot building addition, a 1,860 square-foot asphalt parking lot expansion and associated site improvements located at 404 Sherman Street, Parcel Number 10-14-126.000, contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant must ensure that the new parking area is graded such that it drains towards the lawn area and does not drain offsite.
2. The applicant must obtain a Building Permit Prior to constructing the building addition.

Mr. Neddo seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

SPECIAL USE PERMIT 338 ACADEMY STREET – PARCEL NUMBER 11-04-128.000

The Planning Board then considered a request submitted by Aaron Netto of Gianaco, LLC to allow a four-unit multifamily dwelling at 338 Academy Street, Parcel Number 11-04-128.000.

Mr. Netto was not in attendance to represent the project. Mr. Katzman asked if the Planning Board had authority to act even though the applicant was not present. Mr. Lumbis replied that there was no strict requirement for any applicant to appear before the Planning Board only a recommendation, but that if any board members had questions that only Mr. Netto could answer, then he may have to wait for a vote.

Mr. Polkowski said that he was sufficiently familiar with the request to answer questions. He then said that the property was originally a four-unit dwelling and added that at one point in time, a previous owner converted the building into a day care center. Mr. Polkowski then said that Mr. Netto now wished to restore the four-unit dwelling use and sought a Special Use Permit to do so.

Mr. Katzman then said that if the City allowed four units again, the building might become too dense for the parcel to accommodate, and specifically noted the site's lack of green space and parking. Mr. Neddo said that there were a lot of places with little or no grass and noted that this site has more parking than what is required.

Mr. Lumbis then said that the property also had a double-wide driveway to accommodate parking at the site. Mr. Katzman then said that this could be a shared driveway and potentially not always available for use.

Mr. Coburn then said that if the applicant was compliant, then the Planning Board could not be opinionated, and needed to follow the rules. Ms. Capone then asked for clarification about what the Zoning Ordinance permits in Residence C Districts. Mr. Urda then referenced Section 310-6 (H) of the Zoning Ordinance, which identifies multifamily dwellings as a permitted use in Residence C Districts, only by special approval of the City Council.

Mr. Neddo then noted that there were four utility meters on the building, left over from its previous use as a four-unit dwelling. Mr. Polkowski added that his understanding was that when the owner that operated a day care center in the building converted the inside, all that owner did was take some doors out.

Mr. Neddo then moved to recommend that City Council approve the request submitted by Aaron Netto of Gianaco, LLC to allow a four-unit multifamily dwelling at 338 Academy Street, Parcel Number 11-04-128.000.

Mr. Rowell seconded the motion and it was approved by a 4-1 vote with Mr. Katzman casting the dissenting vote.

Mr. Katzman then moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Capone seconded the motion and all voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 3:27 PM.